

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OPIC-03 AID-05 IO-10 /081 W

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R 111455Z APR 75

FM AMCONSUL LUANDA

TO XECSTATE WASHDC 3421

INFO AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUANDA 0396

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV PINT AO

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH LUCIO LARA

1. I TALKED ON APRIL 10 WITH MPLA DEPUTY CHIEF LUCIO LARA

TO BRING MYSELF UP TO DATE ON MPLA ATTITUDES AND OUTLOOK.
AS ALWAYS HAPPENS WITH LARA, THE CONVERSATION BECAME DISJOINTED
AND IT WAS DIFFICULT TO GET FACTS OR FIRM OPINIONS ON CURRENT
DEVELOPMENTS. I HAD TO KEEP BRINGING HIM BACK FROM DISCOURSES
ON THE NON-COMMUNIST NATURE OF MPLA AND THE BRUTALITY OF FNLA.

2. ON CIVIL WAR, LARA SAID HE BELIEVES WAR IS POSSIBLE, BUT
NOT PROBABLE. THE KEY TO PEACE, HE SAID, IS THE ATTITUDE
OF FNLA, WHOSE ACTIONS IN THE LUANDA GHETTOES HAVE EARNED
IT BITTER HATRED. IF FNLA TROOPS DO NOT STOP PROVOKING THE
POPULACE, MAJOR VIOLENCE WILL REOCCUR. GHETTO INHABITANTS ARE
AT THE BURSTING POINT.
FNLA TROOPS ARE STILL STOPPING PEOPLE ON
THE STREET AND SEARCHING FOR DOCUMENTS THAT WILL IDENTIFY THE
SUSPECT AS AN MPLA ADHERENT. THEY ARE ALSO BREAKING INTO HOMES
WITH MPLA INSIGNIA; THEY BEAT UP THE INHABITANTS, DESTROY PROPERTY
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AND SOMETIMES TAKE PEOPLE OFF TO PRISON. MANY OF THE FNLA

TROOPS SPEAK ONLY LINGALA AND FRENCH AND SO HAVE NO MEANS OF COMMUNICATING WITH THE POPULATION. LUANDANS, FOR THEIR PART LOOK UPON THE TROOPS WITH SUSPICION AND DISDAIN AND EITHER REFUSE TO OBEY FNLA ORDERS OR TAUNT THE TROOPS, WHO REACT TO SUCH TREATMENT WITH BLIND RAGE. MPLA PIONEERS, THE CHILDREN'S ARM OF THE ORGANIZATION, GIVE FNLA TROOPS A HARD TIME AND FNLA OVERREACTS TO THE KIDS' TAUNTS AND PRANKS. FNLA, SAID LARA, WOULD DO EVERYONE A FAVOR AND REDUCE TENSION IF THEY SENT IN PORTUGUESE SPEARMEN TROOPS. IT WOULD ALSO HELP IF FNLA STOPPED ACCUSING MPLA OF BEING COMMUNIST AND CEASE PLAYING UP STORIES THAT MPLA IS USING RUSSIAN MADE WEAPONS. THESE ARE UNFAIR ATTACKS.

3. LARA CLAIMED THAT MPLA HAS CONTROL OF ITS BASE ORGANIZATIONS, WHICH DOES NOT INCLUDE THE MUCH DISCUSSED PEOPLE'S POWER, OR NEIGHBORHOOD COMMITTEES. HE SAID THESE ORGANIZATIONS EXISTED BEFORE MPLA CAME TO LUANDA LAST NOVEMBER. THEY WERE STARTED AS AN ANSWER TO A DESPERATE NEED FOR ORDER AND TWO WAY COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND POPULATION AFTER THE VIOLENCE OF JULY AND AUGUST, 1974. OF COURSE, SAID LARA, LUANDA IS AN MPLA TOWN AND MANY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMITTEES ARE VERY PRO-MPLA, BUT THIS IS NOT THE SAME THING AS BEING PART OF THE ORGANIZATION. MPLA DID NOT ARM THESE PEOPLE, THEY HAD PLENTY OF ARMS BEFORE MPLA ARRIVED IN TOWN. WHILE ON THE SUBJECT OF ARMS, LARA ADDED THAT THE WHITES HAVE MORE ARMS THAN THE BLACKS. HE ASSERTED THAT DURING THE RECENT FIGHTING WHITES FIRED ON THE MPLA HEADQUARTERS.

4. ON ELECTIONS, LARA SAID, THAT MPLA MOST EMPHATICALLY WANTS THEM, BUT IT OBJECTS TO THE TACTIC USED BY OTHERS OF CRYING OUT FOR ELECTIONS WITHOUT DOING ANYTHING TO GET ORGANIZED. WHAT IS NEEDED ARE VEHICLES TO GET PEOPLE AROUND THE COUNTRY, MONEY FROM THE GOVERNMENT, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, PERHAPS FROM THE UNITED NATIONS, AND ANY NUMBER OF OTHER THINGS THAT NO ONE SEEMS TO HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT. HE RECOGNIZED THAT TIME IS GROWING SHORT, BUT THAT IF ACTION WERE TAKEN NOW IT MIGHT STILL BE FEASIBLE TO HAVE ELECTIONS IN OCTOBER.

5. SUMMIT MEETING. LARA SAID THE MPLA HAS NO DIRECT RESPONSE TO ITS CALL FOR A TRIPARTITE SUMMIT MEETING OF THE THREE LIBERATION

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GROUP LEADERS. SAVIMBI HAS INDICATED INTEREST AND LARA IS CONVINCED THAT ROBERTO WILL GO ALONG WITH THE IDEA. THE TWO MAJOR AREAS OF THE ALVOR AGREEMENT THAT NEED SOME REVISION ARE ELECTIONS AND SECURITY MATTERS. WHEN THE MOVEMENTS NEGOTIATED AGREEMENTS AT MOMBASA AND ALVOR THEY DID SO WITHOUT ANY PRIOR EXPERIENCE. NOW, AFTER MORE THAN TWO MONTHS, THERE IS AN EVIDENT NEED FOR MAKING SOME CHANGES, NOTHING MAJOR, BUT ADJUSTMENTS. HE DID NOT WANT TO GET INTO SPECIFICS AT

THIS TIME, BUT I GATHER MPLA IS THINKING ABOUT EITHER A
POSTPONEMENT OF THE ELECTIONS OR A FORMULA THAT WOULD ALLOW
THE LEADERSHIP OF THE PARTIES TO SELECT DELEGATES TO THE
CONSTITUTENT ASSEMBLY. MPLA'S MAJOR CONCERN IN THE SECURITY
FIELD IS THE LARGE NUMBER OF FNLA TROOPS IN LUANDA. LARA
SAID THE NUMBER WAS BETWEEN 2,000 AND 2,500 AND ANOTHER
250 WERE BROUGHT IN BY TRUCK THIS WEEK.
KILLORAN

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